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AN ENDLESS CHAIN

DEAR EDITOR: I have received an "endless chain letter," asking me to send ten cancelled stamps to some one in New South Wales, and to make copies of the letter to send to other persons who are to do the same. The letter is written in behalf of a children's ward which needs funds and asserts that if 5,000,000 cancelled stamps are sent within a specified time, enough money will be raised to admit more children.

I have sent copies of the letter, as requested, but would very much like to know about the same. Perhaps I am ignorant, but I cannot see how cancelled stamps in Australia can build a ward. A. W.

[The post-office department of Rochester informs us that it knows of no value in cancelled stamps except that, among five million, there might be a few of rare date or kind which might have a money value for collectors.—Ed.]

A COURSE FOR THE "SOCIAL NURSE"

DEAR EDITOR: With the end of the college year in sight, and also the terminating of the first year of the course given at Teachers College, N. Y., in "District Nursing and Health Protection," the writer wishes to express her gratitude to those members of her profession who have by their endless forethought and energy made it possible for graduate nurses to fit themselves for social and district work. Also, at the same time she wishes to show her appreciation of having been one of the fortunate persons permitted to take the course, and to answer a question which has been asked time and time again by others, viz., "Is it worth while?" This her readers must answer for themselves after reading this short outline which is but a poor attempt to portray the fullness of a course which has been of such great value to one of its students. In September, 1910, through the munificence of Mrs. Helen Hartley Jenkins, Teachers College, Columbia University, was able to create a new course in the Department of Nursing and Health, known as District Nursing and Health Protection, which is designed to prepare graduate nurses and others for the various fields of social, preventive, and educational work to which they are constantly being called and for which as yet little or no adequate training has been given. Nurses are to be congratulated that they were the first to see the crying need of a broader preparation than the hospital training schools have as yet supplied; although there is a rather wide-spread improvement in their curricula within the last few years, the evolution of which must surely be brought about, I mean that of training their nurses to the "social aspect" of their patient's life. The need of the trained nurse has never before been so clearly indicated as it is to-day in the many branches of preventive and health work, and nurses ought not to let their chance slip by. Their hospital training makes a splendid foundation for this field, but needs further building upon, and it is with this superstructure that the administrators of the department of nursing and health are engaged. Their plan is to use this solid and necessary groundwork as a basis for the building of the social nurse, who will thereby be equipped for the field, not only with the narrow view of life obtained from her hospital but with the broader aspect which takes into consideration all that relates to the patient's welfare.

In order to obtain this view the nurse must know the national characteristics of the various races with which she will come in contact which she must

recognize if she is to be a successful worker and friend. Combined with this she must know the various charitable and philanthropic agencies with which she will be obliged to co-operate. Laws of state and city must be familiar to her, and a thorough knowledge of the various allied activities going on around her and the people conducting the same. It is with this idea that the course has been mapped out.

The midyear examinations are past and the final ones are in sight, and when one realizes that, for the time being at least, college days are nearly over, the fact brings much regret; and more than one member of the class is taking away with her the troubled thought, "Shall I be able to come again?" This in itself answers the question, Has it been worth while? Even for such a brief time one cannot but feel the effect of the wholesome atmosphere of Teachers College, with its large body of students and the influence of the various professors, whose sole interest in life seems to be to help their students. No one can live there without becoming a very different being and carrying away with her a changed aspect of life. Nurses with their previous inelastic training are often slow to appreciate its freedom and privileges. I am glad to say they finally do, and on the whole recognize its value and see how much more effectual their services can be to their patients, whether in the ward of the hospital or in the private home. Each case becomes a living individual's, whose interests and care extend beyond the narrow walls of the ward.

A. R. O.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NURSE TO HER PROFESSION

DEAR EDITOR: There are many who think that on the day of their graduation the victory is won, but the battle has not been fought, it has but begun. They have but completed their training, which means a "preparation."

Upon our graduation day a newer sense of responsibility takes possession of us; we realize that ours is perhaps the most responsible of all work, being, as it is, a battle between life and death. Time and money can rectify the faults of others, but in caring for the sick, should a death result through *our* fault neither time nor money can ever bring back life.

Many times we are called upon to nurse those in the poorest classes in life, and from a superficial glance there may not seem anything especially inviting in this work; but pausing a while to consider, what a pleasure we can derive from caring for those poor neglected souls, casting a little ray of sunshine into their lives, and trying to make up for the life of poverty which, perhaps after all, was not of their own making. To soothe the weary sufferer, no matter what the affliction may be, and, yes, often to bring a soul to the remembrance of her God, is it not a work to be coveted?

Yet there are many who have not the least idea what it means to be a nurse. I had a sad experience of this sort very recently. I was called upon to nurse a lady, who told me frankly that before I came she would not allow a nurse inside her door. Her relatives had to insist upon her having one, for, if left to herself, she would willingly have died rather than be touched by a nurse. This all came because she knew of instances where a few nurses were black sheep and a disgrace to the profession. She had so little respect for one that she used to say the most insulting things in my presence. I should have given up the case only that I knew her people were very anxious that she should be taken care of, and I resolved to attribute her mood to her illness.